



National Weather Service Aviation Services Prototyping 2006

Background

Consistent with the FAA's Air Traffic Organization's (ATO) philosophy to review, upgrade, and create efficiencies in various functions, in January 2006 the National Weather Service (NWS) Corporate Board agreed to prototype a more effective and efficient forecast process for the CWSU. Prototyping activities are described below.

What is the purpose of the NWS Prototyping activities?

There are two objectives of this prototype. (1) Demonstrate the capability to perform Center Weather Service Unit (CWSU) functions from remote locations; (2) Provide new decision aid products that translate weather impact on en-route and terminal air operations, while providing common situational awareness to all prototype participants.

Where will the Prototype take place?

Prototyping activities will be conducted from the Sterling WFO for the Leesburg ARTCC, and from Dallas/Fort Worth ARTCC for the Houston ARTCC.

How will the Prototype be set up?

The CWSUs at Leesburg and Houston will remain intact and staffed in their current state to provide a "safety-net" during the prototype. During prototype operation hours (Monday through Friday, 8 hours per day) the Sterling WFO and the DFW CWSU will provide routine and on-demand weather related activities to the Leesburg and Houston ARTCCs, respectively. The NWS will provide all necessary equipment (client workstations for the TMU) and communication paths for the prototype, to include a telephone "hot-line" for TMU immediate access to the remote NWS operational unit. During hours when the prototype is not active, CWSU functions will return to Leesburg CWSU and Houston CWSU.

When will prototyping activities take place?

The prototype is planned over a three (3) month period, from June 1, 2006 until August 31, 2006. June will be utilized for training for both NWS and ARTCC personnel. At the end of June, with training complete, the prototype units will begin operations and function July 1, 2006 to August 31, 2006. An assessment of the prototypes will be made immediately following completion of the test, with recommendations to both NWS and FAA leadership on how best to proceed.

How will the prototype impact day to day operation at the ARTCC?

No degradation of information provided by NWS services is expected during this prototype; it is designed to be "seamless" and user friendly for all FAA staff.

For more information, or if you have questions pertaining to the NWS Aviation Services prototyping activities, please send an email to:

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